

**Closing Remarks
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**MABS Mindanao Regional Roundtable Conference
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Waterfront Hotel, Davao**

(Acknowledge guests.)

Good afternoon!

I am very pleased to be here this afternoon and glad to see that so many of you have taken the time out to be with us.

Today's conference focused on one of the main goals of the MABS Program - ensuring long-term sustainability of microfinance operations. MABS has now worked with rural banks over the past decade to adapt to the latest microfinance technology within your banks. For some of you, compliance to the *MABS Approach* required a major shift and new focus. For others it was simply adding new products and services.

Big changes or small, the past ten years laid the groundwork for decades to come - seeing to it that participating banks continue to maintain profitable microfinance operations, uphold and improve standards, and continue to reap and extend the benefits of the MABS Approach as well as to continually improve what you do through new technologies.

Two new tools introduced today – the enhanced MABS Performance Monitoring System and the Distance Learning Modules – were designed to support and improve your microfinance operations. The session on marketing aimed to deepen understanding of the microfinance market and enhance competitiveness.

We are also pleased that organizations that you probably will be working with in the future to further promote microfinance best practices – like our MABS service providers ARMDEV and Punla

sa Tao Foundation as well as the Microfinance Council of the Philippines are with us today.

Like all other fields – microfinance – the technology, methodologies, standards, and practices – is dynamic. The challenge is to develop the capability to respond to ever changing demands. MABS will continue to work with you to develop this capability.

On behalf of USAID, let me thank you for being with us today.

Our presence here together re-affirms our commitment to a common goal – to extend and expand financial services to the microenterprise sector and to contribute to the growth of the economy.

I hope that today's conference has been informative, productive and useful.

Thank you very much – I look forward to tracking our progress over the coming years!